

## Contributions

### LIBERTY OF GRACE AND LIBERTY OF SIN

C. H. BALSBAUGH

*My dear sister* :—Is there such a grief between P—and C—that no fraternal relation can exist between them? Must I endorse every opinion and act before I can consistently use the terms brother and sister? I believe in holiness as the imperative condition of salvation, and that is vastly more than ordinances, or traditions, or ecclesiastical peculiarities. Christ said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John 14:6. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." Rom. 8:9. "Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." John 15:19. "Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." James 4:4. They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit." Gal. 5:24, 25. "I beseech you by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Rom. 12:1. "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and ye are not your own: for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are God's." I Cor. 6:19, 20.

These are the words of the Holy Ghost, and are absolutely essential to the glory of God, and the wants of humanity. They are a sufficient and infallible answer to all your interrogations. No matter what pleases the flesh may advance, God incarnate is the full and only illustration of the true and perfect idea of life. This is the glorious liberty of grace. All other liberty is delusion and bondage. If "our life is hid with Christ in God," and we "rejoice in the Lord always," and "our joy is full," what care we for either the applause or the scoffs of the world. Col. 3:3; Phil. 4:4; John 5:11. The emphatic, extreme declaration of Paul is the vernacular of the Spirit-born sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. Phil. 3:8; II Cor. 6:14-18.

Truth and God are synonyms. In him is not yea and nay. He is the everlasting yea. II Cor. 1:18, 19, 20. Truth is indivisible. It scorns all compromise. To be a Christian is to be one with God in character, purpose, peace, joy, fruition. "To me to live is Christ." Phil. 1:2. Not self, not money, not pleasure, not fame, but God in Christ, the center, substance, perfection and glory of my being. If your friends and associates pout and mock at your simplicity, let them see in your face and deportment the beauty of holiness, and the unspeakable joy of your fellowship with Jesus. It is one of the greatest luxuries of the Christ life to return good for evil, and to make sacrifice for enemies and persecutors. Do not yield a

hair-breadth to the importunities of your friends to participate in their vain, carnal displays and pleasures. Let your joy be the crucifixion of the flesh, and the regnancy of the Holy Ghost, and your display the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price." I Pet. 3:3, 4. Let Paul's claim be the testimony of your consciousness, and the verification of life. "I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." Gal. 2:20. This is salvation. This is the ante-part of heaven.

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### REFLECTIONS ON CHURCH HISTORY

D. BAILEY

I have been reading Brumbaugh's History of the German Baptist Brethren Church and I find in it some events recorded which have aroused in my mind a train of thought and it seems good to me to call attention to one or two illustrating the standing of some of the early brethren on matters of which some of us have heard something in our day.

The first thing I will notice is a trouble which arose in Germany, and did more, in my opinion, to kill the church in Germany than the persecution of its enemies.

This was the controversy over the expulsion of a minister named Hager. John Naas the presiding elder and Peter Becker were on Hager's side, but he was opposed by Elder Leibe and four other brethren and it seems that Elder Leibe was so eloquent that he won the congregation from Elder Naas and accomplished his purpose. This caused an open rupture in the church and nothing more could be accomplished in Germany. As the trouble was concerning the young man's marriage we are led to think that the followers of Leibe established the Convent at Ephrata, tho he afterwards married out of church himself and became a merchant.

Peter Becker established the church at Germantown and John Nass that at Amwell, N. J., and we think their liberal spirit still influences those churches and their offshoots.

In regard to a "great meeting" in Germantown in 1791 it is said, "After careful deliberation the visiting Brethren gave us in the fear of the Lord an advice, to which they signed their names, and we Germantown Brethren have also signed in the name of the entire congregation to bear witness that we have received their advice in submissive love," etc.

This shows only advice, nothing mandatory.

A descendant of Elder Martin Urner second, states that once when on his way to annual meeting at Philadelphia (Germantown) from the Conventry church where he lived, another minister who was with him requested him to preach against the wearing of fine clothes, as the brethren and sisters in Philadelphia were getting entirely too fashionable. Elder Urner made no reply. The brother then asked him if he heard his re-

quest. "Yes," said he. "And will you do it," persisted the brother. "If I am called upon to preach," replied the Elder, "I hope I shall have something of more importance than to talk to people about the rags with which they cover themselves."

These citations are made to show that the anti-Christian spirit appeared early in the history of the church, with its policy of rule or ruin, but that the real builders of the church were liberal minded men.

### THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH

Z. T. LIVENGOD

The principles that governed the early Christian church were Holy Ghost—given and were the essentials that should prompt every act and deed of the people of God.

Today there is much doubt in the churches as to the application of these same principles now.

There are even church members in every congregation who say that the Christian can not "walk in his steps" as Peter, the inspired Apostle, said we should. One of the principles which made the early church so potent for good was constancy in teaching apostolic doctrine.

Surely this is needed now as well and a lack of sound doctrine teaching will only weaken the church. Another element among the early Christian church that made it a Divine power was harmonious action. "One mind, one heart." Not that all did the same things, looked alike and thought alike. No, not any more than that the Harvester in all its parts was doing the same thing, but every part was doing its work and not the work of another. All the parts were doing faithfully and truly their allotted share of work, yet all were working under the same law of unity. The true union of small wires make the mighty cable. The union of Christian forces is what makes Satan tremble and flee. Can't the church have union now? Fellowship among the members was a godly weapon in building up righteousness and tearing down sin.

I doubt whether we can have fellowship with one another and God and walk in sin. "If we walk in the light as he is in the light we have fellowship one with another."

Was the fellowship among the Apostolic Christians partial or complete? "They had all things common." Fellowship of joy, fellowship in suffering, in work, in burden bearing. This was the most effective weapon to battle ungodliness and establish godliness the early church had. Is this fellowship divine? Is it for the Christian now? Certainly the principles that governed and made successful the early church will make the church prosper now. How zealous were these simple, honest and faithful believers. Daily in the temple, worshipping God and continued in prayer. And all was done with joy and gladness, praising God and many signs and wonders were done by such disciples. God help us to get back to the principles of Jesus as lived and practiced by the primitive Christians. With the means of